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Letter dated 24 June 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the President of the Human Rights Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith information on further violations of international humanitarian law by Armenia in the context of the intensification of the armed conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan since 2 April 2016 (see annex).

I would be highly appreciative if you could kindly circulate the present letter and the annex thereto* as a document of the thirty-second session of the Human Rights Council under agenda item 4.

(Signed) Vaqif Sadiqov

Ambassador, Permanent Representative

* Circulated as received, in the language of submission only.

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Annex to the letter dated 24 June 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the President of the Human Rights Council

Information on further violations of international humanitarian law by Armenia in the context of intensification of the armed conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan since April 2, 2016

For more than two decades, Armenia has been using force against the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. It occupied twenty percent of Azerbaijan's territories and ethnically cleansed about one million Azerbaijanis from those areas, and committed numerous other war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. Armenia openly disregards the UN Security Council resolutions No 822, 853, 874 and 884 that reaffirm the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, and demand immediate, full and unconditional withdrawal of occupying forces from Azerbaijani territories.

Starting from the early morning of April 2, 2016, Armenia has intensified its military activity in the conflict area, which has been accompanied with numerous acts of violation of international humanitarian law tantamount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. Armenia has been conducting systematic, deliberate and targeted attacks on non-combatant civilian population encompassing inter alia women, children and elderly residing in the densely populated areas adjacent to the line of contact of armed forces of Armenia and Azerbaijan. As a result of the bombardment of 32 settlements, 6 civilians, among them 2 children below 16 years, were killed and 26 civilians were seriously wounded. Without timely use of effective civil defense measures, the number of causalities among population would be significantly higher. Substantial damages were inflicted upon private and public property, including civilian critical infrastructure. 232 private houses, 99 electricity poles, 3 electrical substations, kilometers of water and gas pipelines were destroyed. Guided missile attacks were directed on social facilities, including schools, hospitals, and places of worship. Instruction had to be suspended in 28 of the damaged schools. One mosque was hit during prayer with high-caliber artillery shells. Compiled information on the consequences of attacks, as of 6 April 2016, is attached.

Armenia's actions represent a grave violation of international humanitarian law, in particular the provisions of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Additional Protocols thereto, as well as 1954 Hague Convention on the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict. As a result of those deliberate attacks, a large number of civilians have been deprived of their basic rights to life, health, property, education, communication, and practicing their religion.

Azerbaijan has taken appropriate measures to counter Armenia's use of force against its territorial integrity and sovereignty, and to ensure the safety of civilian population and property within its internationally recognized borders.

Azerbaijan has repeatedly brought to the attention of the international community that the primary reason of the tension in the region is the unlawful presence of the armed forces of Armenia in the territories of Azerbaijan. The recent actions of the military dictatorship of Armenia, which is led by a group of war criminals, represents a serious challenge to international peace and security, and the values that the civilized world stands for. The Republic of Azerbaijan calls upon the international community to condemn Armenia on its blatant violation of international humanitarian law. Azerbaijan will spare no efforts to ensure peace and justice in the region.